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In Laos, it is also used on a charter basis to support the irregular war effort against the North Vietnamese, transporting supplies, equipment and food as well as advisers and the Meo tribesmen and their families from hilltop airstrip to hilltop airstrip.

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The CIA does not and never has paid its assets in it and does not and never has dealt in it. The tribesmen with whom the CIA works, however, do deal in it, and raw opium in small amounts has undoubtedly moved on Air America flights in the bundles of Meo personal possessions.

**AIR AMERICA WILL** stop this when it can, but it isn't easy. No U.S. airline, for example, has yet discovered how to prevent even shotguns from being smuggled aboard their flights. The problem is in any event inconsequential, since the amounts are small and des-

igned for use only as currency in Meo village barter.

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The responsibility, moreover, is not that of the airline but of the customs service in the country of arrival. Here again, diplomatic luggage is immune to search, as are certain official aircraft used by the military, and a country that insists on an illegal search had better find what it is looking for.

**THE JULY HARPER'S** magazine features an extract from the forthcoming book "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia," by Yale Ph.D. student Alfred McCoy. The extract starts with a detailed description of the arrival at Orly Airport in Paris on 25 April 1971 of Prince Sopsaisana, the new Laotian ambassador to France.

Despite the presence of a large reception party, the prince insisted on waiting for his numerous official suitcases like an ordinary tourist, and when they arrived he at once noticed one was missing. He angrily demanded that it be produced; but was forced to depart with the promise that it would be delivered to the Laotian embassy as soon as it was found.

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- The CIA works closely with many of these figures.

- Ergo, the CIA is supporting the drug trade.

While the first two statements are correct, the conclusion is not valid and is not borne out by any evidence.

McCoy might, for example, have asked who tipped the French government off to this particular shipment. Customs officials do not take it upon themselves to search an ambassador's luggage. Authority for that can only come from the highest levels, and takes days to arrange.

The Orly officials, moreover, knew precisely which suitcase to sequester. They removed the right piece of luggage and let the rest go in a matter of minutes, obviously before there had been any chance to search all of them. In short they had heard from Vietnamese exactly what to look for, and this tip did not come from the Laotian government.

The U.S. government, through the State Department and the CIA, is doing all it can to scotch the trade. The government of South Vietnam has had impressed on it that collusion between its customs officials and arriving smugglers is a serious matter, and it has arrested both its own citizens and halted and searched ranking foreigners.

In short, neither the CIA nor any other U.S. agency has ever deliberately engaged in, fostered or cast a deliberately blind eye on narcotics smuggling, although it has worked in other fields with officials who have been privately active in that one.

Raw opium has undoubtedly been transported on Air America flights in the past, but only as a private venture of a foreign passenger, and never with the connivance of an Air America employee. And the CIA has done what it can to prevent the use of Air America for such purposes.

The stories will no doubt continue, as long as there is a need for air services in Indochina, and as long as opium holds the peculiar place it does in the economy of that part of the world. But the stories must be seen in perspective, and in no way will they support the contention that the U.S. government, through the activities of the CIA, has deliberately furthered the international narcotics trade.

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20 AUG 1972



By DONALD R. MORRIS  
Post News Analyst

# CIA helps to curb, not aid, dope trade

It is still not common knowledge that in 1971 President Nixon ordered the CIA to join the fight against the international narcotics trade, or that, according to John E. Ingersoll, director of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, "much of the progress we are now making in identifying overseas traffic can, in fact, be attributed to CIA cooperation."

It seems, at first glance, a strange choice. The CIA has no executive powers at home or abroad, and no expertise in narcotics or in criminal police work. Why, then, was it deployed on this particular firing line, and what contribution has it made?

The answers can be found in the complex nature of the drug trade.

Most of the world's raw opium originates in Turkey or in the "Golden Triangle" of the Burma-Thailand-Laos border. Tightly organized and constantly changing channels bring it to such diverse areas as Vientiane, Bangkok, Hong Kong or Marseille for processing, and equally complex routes via still other countries bring it to the borders of America.

The current attack on the trade is two-pronged: By diplomatic pressures to reduce raw opium and finished heroin production, and, since production can never be eliminated entirely, to increase

the effectiveness of the U.S. Customs Bureau by timely forewarning of specific smuggling shipments.

None of the countries touched by the trade can do this alone. The Turkish government can move against raw opium production; French, British and Thai police can crack down on processing and smuggling, with varying degrees of success.

## Some powerless

Some countries can do little or nothing; the opium areas in Burma and Thailand are controlled by autonomous insurgent groups depending on the opium for economic survival, while no government in Laos — there are several — has any real control over the landscape. Other countries, used for transshipment, may not be aware of what is going on.

But, sophisticated or not, what these countries cannot do is coordinate their activities, because with the best will in the world the liaison mechanisms on the proper levels do not exist.

The French police, for example, can be as effective as any in the world. But if they are operating against a processing installation in Marseille with an input from Izmir, they simply cannot get in touch with the local Turkish police to coordinate their plans. They have neither the funds, manpower, nor charter to do so. They can only report within their own government, until at the proper level their information is passed to the Turks through diplomatic channels, after which it must filter down on the other side.

The CIA is made to order to broker such exchanges. CIA stations and bases throughout the world have direct liaison contact with local security forces, and they maintain a superb communications network. The agency can serve as a link between countries and organizations which have never been in touch with each other before, and which would have formidable problems if they tried, passing timely and accurate intelligence to the exact level where it is required.

The CIA also can collect operational intelligence on the sprawling ramifications of the trade, especially in countries which cannot do this for themselves.

From raw production through processing to the final smuggling attempt, a narcotics chain may involve scores of people in a dozen countries, and because security is at a premium, its organization parallels that of a clandestine intelligence network.

The techniques employed to penetrate both are identical, and the CIA's stock-in-trade is its skill in spotting, developing, recruiting and managing agent assets for the collection of intelligence.

The French and the British, of course, can do this work themselves, and CIA entry into their domestic criminal work is out of the question. Other, less developed countries, however, cannot manage such activities themselves without the training that CIA liaison can provide.

The CIA also has the requisite headquarters establishment to support and coordinate such a world-wide

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program, setting up and maintaining the multi-national files involved, running traces and analyzing and collecting the raw information so that finished intelligence can be passed to appropriate authorities for action.

## Coordination

The CIA, in fact, probably is the only organization in the world that can do such a job, and it has recently established a special headquarters branch to coordinate the work. The field stations were long ago ordered into the battle.

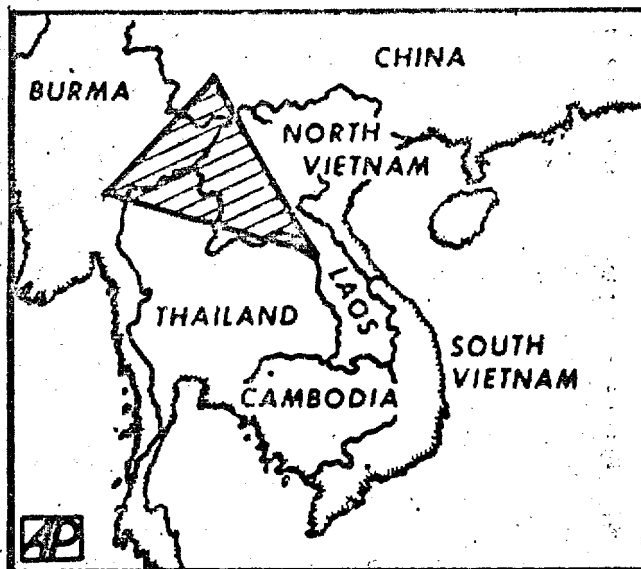
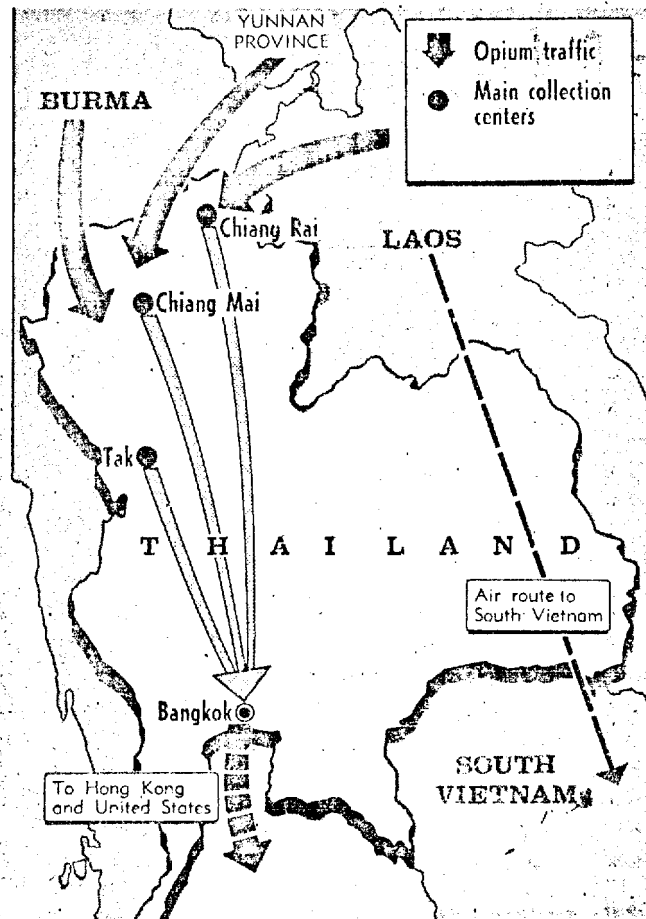
One of the first fruits of CIA labor has been a lengthy report to the Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control, which promises to become the guide book on which the fight will rest.

In considerable detail, it covers the entire world opium situation country by country, tracing out licit and illicit opium production, processing and distribution, as well as summarizing the problems faced by the individual countries and the multilateral control efforts. The report is unclassified.



Maps pinpoint 'Golden Triangle' where opium poppy is grown, refined for heroin and collected.  
Top photo: Hilltops along Thailand-Laos border where plant flourishes.  
Left: Knife slits pod to drain off raw opium.

—AP, Christian Science Monitor photos, maps



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**SECRET VS. PUBLIC**

# U. S. Drug Reports Differ

By **MICHAEL SATCHELL**  
Star-News Staff Writer

While secret intelligence reports over the past 18 months have presented a gloomy assessment of America's worldwide efforts to hamper international narcotics trafficking, the White House and the Justice Department have carefully fostered the opposite image — that the government was making significant gains in the fight against opium, heroin and cocaine smuggling.

In speeches and press releases, officials heralded Turkey's agreement to halt opium poppy production, the increased cooperation with foreign governments and record seizures of narcotics as hard evidence that the battle was well on its way to being won.

Dr. Jerome Jaffe, special consultant to the president on narcotics, and John E. Ingersoll, head of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, called them "major breakthroughs" and "milestones in the cooperative effort with foreign governments."

Thursday, the government released a report entitled "World Opium Survey, 1972" that reflected in part what intelligence networks had been saying for months.

But while the report acknowledged that things were not as rosy as pictured earlier, it still glossed over most of the facts and conclusions contained in Central Intelligence Agency and BNDD summaries that suggest the United States has only touched the tip of the world narcotics problem.

These summaries, stamped "Secret, No Foreign Dissemination," survey narcotics production and smuggling throughout Asia, Europe, Central and South America.

They detail widespread complicity by officials in several countries, suggest "extra-legal" actions the United States could consider, emphasize that the Turkish agreement will have little effect on the U.S. heroin problem, note that Vietnam war requirements have hampered the narcotics fight, and conclude that the massive effort by the United States and other nations has had little real permanent effect on the complex narcotics trade.

Among the major points in the summaries:

- Prohibiting the growth of opium poppies in Turkey is no guarantee against illegal cultivation, which has been around 100 tons a year.

- The Turkish agreement will have minimal impact on well established European smuggling pipelines that will easily switch from Turkey to Yugoslavia, Persia and Afghanistan for opium supplies.

- "Extra-legal actions such as flooding markets with harmless or aggravating heroin substitutes to destroy the trade's credibility, destruction of narcotics factories by hiring criminal or non-official elements, pay-offs of corrupted officials as an income substitute, and defoliation, are highly problematical, but should not be rejected out of hand."

- The trade cannot flourish without corrupt civil servants and police in key positions. In the "Bulgarian Customs Game" for example, government officials sell to French traffickers opium that Bulgarian customs officials have confiscated from smugglers. The smugglers often pay small fines and can even buy back their own narcotics seized earlier.

- Despite increased narcotics seizures, no critical shortage has been observed on the illicit market.

- The probability of eliminating the trade in cocaine — currently the fastest growing hard narcotic used in the United States — is nil.

The CIA and BNDD intelligence summaries spell out in vivid detail the enormous problems facing the United States in trying to curtail the highly organized and immensely profitable international narcotics trade.

Illicit opium production, for example, is estimated at something between 1,200 and 1,400 tons each year. To produce enough heroin to satisfy American addicts and users, only 40 tons of opium are required.

Turkish opium was furnishing about 80 percent of the heroin destined for the United States with the remainder coming in from Mexico and a small amount from the Golden Triangle area of Laos, Thailand - Burma.

The CIA reports state that in Burma, the most important nation in the Golden Triangle and which produces about 400 tons of opium annually, the United States is virtually impotent in its enforcement opportunities.

"Opportunities to exert influence are extremely limited," the reports say. "Lack of U.S. leverage suggests the best hope lies with the United Nations. Burmese customs and military officials are reported in collusion with smugglers."

In neighboring Thailand, the reports state, "officials of the Royal Thai Army and Customs at the several checkpoints along the route to Bangkok are usually bribed and 'protection' fees prepaid by the smuggling syndicate or by the driver at the checkpoints."

In the Vientiane to Hong Kong pipeline, the CIA summaries report, "most of it is probably smuggled aboard military or commercial air flights including Royal Air Laos and Air Vietnam, often

by or in collusion with the crew."

In recent years, the Golden Triangle area has begun to produce finished heroin products for shipment rather than simply raw opium or morphine base from which the heroin is made.

"The technology of refining opium into heroin is no more complex than making bootleg whisky in the United States," a CIA report says, countering the popular image of complicated heroin "laboratories."

Pressure in Europe is creating shifts in smuggling patterns with West Germany emerging as a major narcotics storage and staging area with Munich, Frankfurt and Hamburg the principal centers.

The role of Bulgaria in recent years has "increased tremendously" and the Communist nation is used as safe haven from which major narcotics operations are directed.

"Sofia has been described as the new center for directing narcotics and arms trafficking between western Europe and the Near East," the reports state. "French and United Kingdom officials have also voiced their belief that Bulgarian government officials may be actively involved in selling seized Turkish narcotics to French traffickers."

As South America emerges as an important transshipment point for narcotics entering the United States, there are indications of increased production of opium poppies in some Latin countries including the Columbia-Ecuador border and Costa Rica.

Cuban exiles and Puerto Rican nationals are playing key roles in the trade and production is switching from marijuana to the more profitable cocaine and heroin.